

# Using First Book at Your Summer Meal Site

## NEW BOOKS FOR THE KIDS YOU SERVE



As a Summer Meal Site, you can play an important role in feeding kids' bodies *and* minds over the summer.



First Book can help you access **free and low-cost new books for the kids you serve**. This guide will help you sign up with First Book and give you some ideas on how you incorporate books into your site programming this summer!

### About First Book ([www.firstbook.org](http://www.firstbook.org))

First Book is a nonprofit organization that provides access to **free and low-cost new books** for children in need. Since 1992, First Book has distributed more than 110 million books and educational resources to programs and schools serving children throughout the United States. First Book currently serves more than 120,000 programs, schools and organizations serving kids from low-income families.

### How First Book Works

Connecting with First Book is easy. Just follow these three steps:

1. **Sign up.** Click [here](#), or visit <http://www.firstbook.org/summermeals> to sign up. Signing up is *free* and takes just a few minutes.
2. **Share some basic information.** Provide some basic contact information, as well as some general information/estimates about the kids you serve (e.g. age ranges, languages spoken). Some other tips for completing registration:
  - In Step 1: Select **I represent a USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Meals Site.**  
In Step 3, Additional School/Program Information: Choose **USDA, Food and Nutrition Services** for both *affiliation* and *how you heard about First Book*. You can choose others groups with which you are affiliated too.  
In Step 3, Eligibility Specifics: Choose **USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Meals Site** when asked *What criteria did you use as the basis for this estimate?*
3. **Connect with First Book's resources:** Once you complete your registration, you'll have immediate, ongoing access to new books and education materials through First Book's resource channels, including the **First Book Marketplace** and the **First Book National Book Bank**.
  - **First Book Marketplace, [www.fbmarketplace.org](http://www.fbmarketplace.org):** Online store offering brand new books for kids ages birth to 18 at up to 90% off retail prices

(average price = \$2.50/book, including shipping). More than 5,000 titles available.

- **First Book National Book Bank**, [www.fbbookbank.org](http://www.fbbookbank.org): National clearinghouse of new books donated from publishers. Once registered, you will receive emails **when books are available** through the FBNBB, and you can go online and apply for titles you want to receive. Books through the FBNBB are free and available for an average of just \$0.45/book shipping and **handling to locations across** the United States.

## Summer Meal Site Programming with First Book



First Book provides an easy, inexpensive way to incorporate reading into your Summer Meal Site. With access to more than 5,000 brand new, high-quality books, you can provide access to great books and encourage the kids you serve to keep reading over the summer so they can improve their reading skills and find the fun in reading.

### **SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY: Summer Fun Starter Kits**

First Book and the No Kid Hungry Campaign have partnered to add a helping of books to the food, friends and fun at summer meal sites this summer. These Summer Fun Starter Kits offer 20 books for \$25 or 50 books for \$40, and include engaging titles sure to get kids excited about reading! Visit [www.fbmarketplace.org/summer-meal-sites](http://www.fbmarketplace.org/summer-meal-sites) to get access to these wonderful collections.

### **How Summer Meal Sites Can Use First Book**

Here are some ideas on how to incorporate First Book into your programming.

- **Establish a lending library.** When kids come to your site, have books available that they can read while they are on site, or that they can take home to read, then bring back when they visit.
- **Develop an incentive program.** Help encourage kids to keep coming back to your site throughout the summer. Establish an incentive program – for every day they attend, they earn points toward a book they can take home and keep.
- **Use books to help reinforce healthy eating habits.** First Book has great books on [healthy eating and healthy habits](#) available, as well as other [resources](#) that

include fun activities on this topic.

- **Encourage creative expression through books.** Have students read a book, then write, draw, or act out their reactions and feelings. Feature the books of a particular author or illustrator and encourage students to write stories and draw pictures in that style.

### **EVENT IDEA: Host a Family Literacy Celebration**

Invite the caring adults in your kids' lives to attend a family literacy celebration. Talk about the importance of literacy while celebrating the fun of reading together. Some ideas for fun activities during the celebration:

- Have kids prepare performances or art based on their favorite books to present to adults
- Encourage kids and parents to dress up as their favorite book characters
- Set up different stations with books and associated activities or questions for parents and children to answer together
- Invite local library representatives to share information on services the library provides and how parents and kids can get library cards

At the end of the event, send every child home with a book from First Book to add to their home library, and provide tips for parents reading with kids. Tips in English, Spanish and other languages are available from First Book's partners at Reading Rockets [here](#).

### **EVENT IDEA: Throw a Reading Party**

Show the kids at your Summer Meal Site that reading is fun with a Reading Party! Select a book to provide to the kids you serve and invite community members and local media for an afternoon of reading that the students will never forget. These celebratory events are lots of fun and offer great volunteer and media opportunities.

Simple steps for hosting a Reading Party include:

- Identify a location or locations for the event.
- Invite volunteers and special guests, including media.
- Arrange for each child to receive one (or more) book(s) along with healthy snacks and treats.
- Invite guest readers—principals, the mayor, local elected officials, television personalities, local children's authors, and other celebrity guests. Don't forget to think about local firemen, policemen, or other "celebrities" that might wow the kids!
- For the Reading Party, divide the students into a number of small "reading circles" centered around one celebrity reader.
- Order books from the [First Book Marketplace](#).



### **Additional Resources**

First Book has more than 5,000 books available on the [First Book Marketplace](#). Here's a quick guide with links to types of books on the First Book Marketplace:

- [STEM](#)
- [Anti-bullying](#)
- [Healthy living](#)
- [Music and arts](#)
- [Games and activities](#)
- [College readiness](#)
- [Reluctant Readers](#)
- [Engaging families](#)
- [Latino culture](#)
- [Other multicultural resources](#)

### **For More Information**

If you have any questions on completing your registration or general questions about how First Book works, contact the First Book Help Team at 1-866-READ-NOW Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST or [help@firstbook.org](mailto:help@firstbook.org).

For additional assistance on how your program can connect with First Book, contact Shannon Burke-Kranzberg at [sburkekranzberg@firstbook.org](mailto:sburkekranzberg@firstbook.org) or (202) 470-4260.